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AUTHOR	Galinsky, Ellen
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ABSTRACT

Noting that what parents and children think about a subject are not always the same, this book details the first comprehensive study ever conducted that asked children and parents for their views on work and family life. The book calls into question accepted thinking on such issues as quality time versus quantity time, how mothers raise children compared to fathers, what children really know about the daily lives of parents at work, and how much parents like their work. Following an introduction discussing why and how the study was conducted (interviews with more than 1,000 third through twelfth graders and their parents), the chapters of the book are: (1) "Reframing the Debate about Working and Children"; (2) "How Children See Their Parents' Parenting Skills"; (3) "Is It Quality Time or Quantity Time?"; (4) "There Is Something about Work"; (5) "There's Something about Family Life, Too"; (6) "Spillover," on how the stresses of work and home life blend into one another; (7) "How Do Work and Family Life Affect Us as Parents?"; (8) "What Are We Teaching Children about Work and Family Life?"; (9) "What Does the Future Hold?"; (10) "How Do We Navigate Work and Family, and How Do We Ask the Children?"; and (11) "What Children Want To Tell the Working Parents of America." Among the findings, the book notes that: responsive parenting is key to the quality of the parent-child relationship, not whether the mother works outside the home; few parents talk with their children about their work lives; children's perceptions of whether the home was financially stable influenced their opinions of the quality of parenting; the presence or absence of the father influenced their opinions of the quality of parenting; and parents' negative or positive attitudes toward work, and their levels of stress, influenced children's opinions of working parents. Contains extensive notes and references, organized by chapter. (HTH)

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